Problem Solving in the Analytical Phase

National Fire Coordination Study

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE/FOREST SERVICE/DIVISION OF FIRE CONTROL

PROBLEM SOLVING IN THE ANALYTICAL PHASE

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PROBLEM SOLVING IN THE ANALYTICAL PHASE

BACKGROUND

On May 28, 1964, the Forest Service agreed to conduct a National Fire Coordination Study and prepare recommendations to help the Office of Civil Defense implement plans and programs to cope with fires resulting from an enemy attack or other major disaster. A task force of four people, situated in the Division of Fire Control, Washington, D. C., and a fifth man, situated in Riverside, California, are leading this work. The study is to be completed by December 31, 1965. Interim phases of the study are to be completed on specified dates. The first phase is to be completed December 15, 1964. The several phases of the study are depicted in Figure 1.

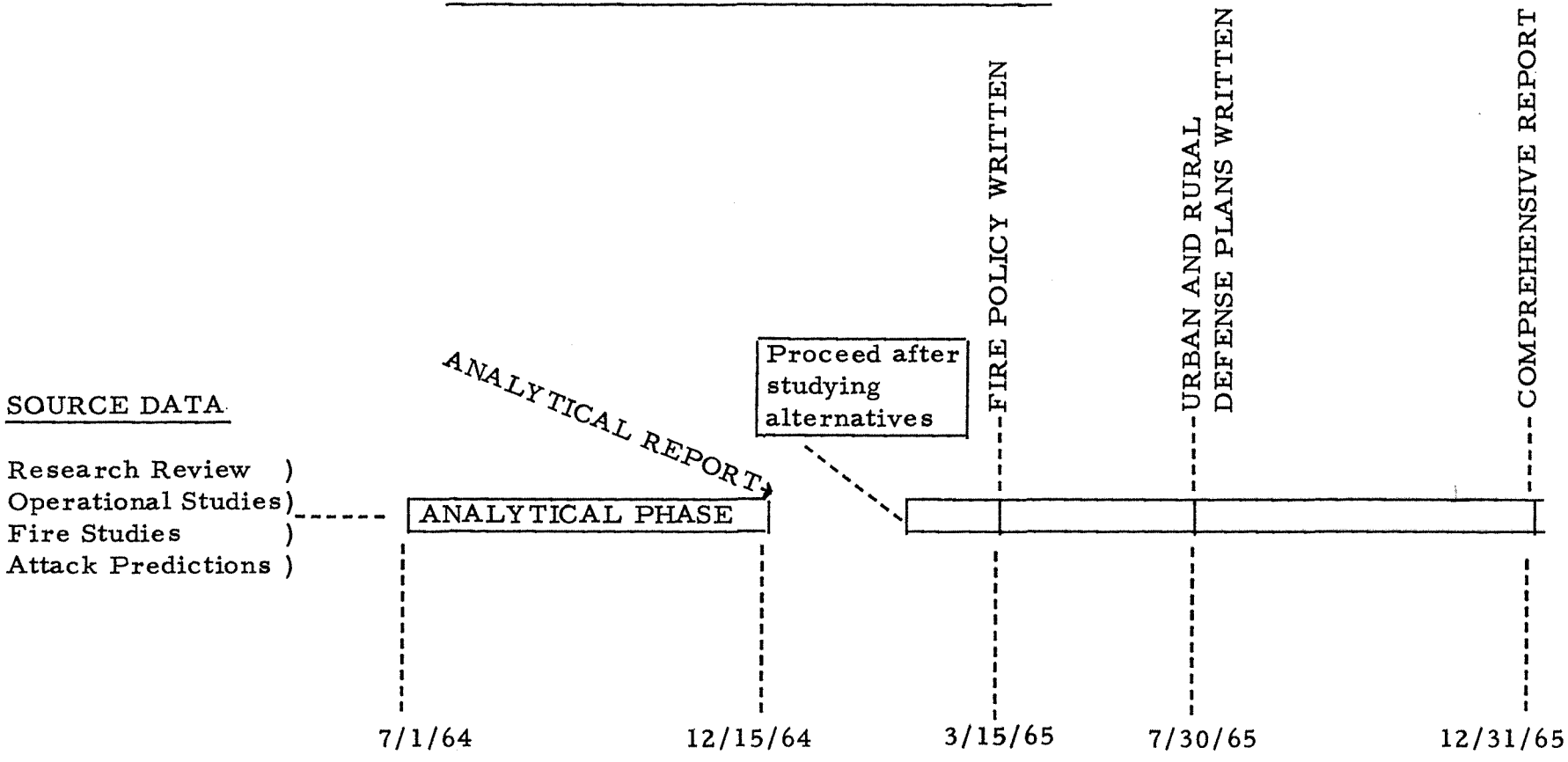
NATIONAL FIRE COORDINATION STUDY
SOURCE DATA
Research Review)
Operational Studies)
Fire Studies)
Attack Predictions)
ANALYTICAL PHASE
ANALYTICAL REPORT
Proceed after studying alternatives
FIRE POLICY WRITTEN
URBAN AND RURAL DEFENSE PLANS WRITTEN
COMPREHENSIVE REPORT
7/1/64
12/15/64
3/15/65
7/30/65
12/31/65

FIGURE 1

THE ANALYTICAL PHASE

The first or analytical phase of this study includes summarizing pertinent fire research, studying large fires, examining the workings and capabilities of our existing fire services, and defining the magnitude of emergencies we could possibly experience. What we learn as a result of these activities becomes the input data for PROBLEM SOLVING. Then, with the help of informed people in the urban and rural fire field, this task force will recommend operational courses of action and define problems needing more study.

Tasks we have performed to gather data for problem solving are:

1. Conducted zone meetings to brief fire people and to solicit ideas and suggestions at Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, Boston, and Memphis.
2. Studied mutual aid and command situations in:
    a. Washington, D. C. metropolitan area
    b. Massachusetts
    c. Michigan
    d. Oregon
    e. California
3. Studied these large fires:
    a. Park Headquarters Fire - South Dakota
    b. Deadwood Fire - South Dakota
    c. Nevada Fires - Nevada
    d. Santa Rosa Fires - California

4. Modelled a range of possible nuclear attacks and predicted post attack fire effects.
5. Summarized pertinent research and literature.
6. Summarized pertinent recommendations made in the past.

INPUT FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

Our meeting, studies, summaries, and models yielded a mass of valuable data. But these data are too cumbersome to use for the effective problem solving and decision making that must precede recommendations. Moreover, some of the data is conflicting and some is less relevant, than others. We refined and made these data more manageable by analyzing the findings of each group of like studies and combining this analysis into a single report. This process is depicted in Figure 2.

Thus, our written input for problem solving is contained in the SIX analysis reports shown in Figure 2. Each participant engaged in problem solving and decision making in the first Phase of the National Fire Coordination Study must read and master these reports. Individual study reports and background data are available in our files for those who want to probe deeper.

SOLVING THE PROBLEMS

Having mastered the input-data our task is to effectively join the knowledge and talent of our problem solving group to; (1) specify the problems that need solving, (2) identify the strengths that can be built upon, and

ANALYTICAL PHASE - NATIONAL FIRE COORDINATION STUDY

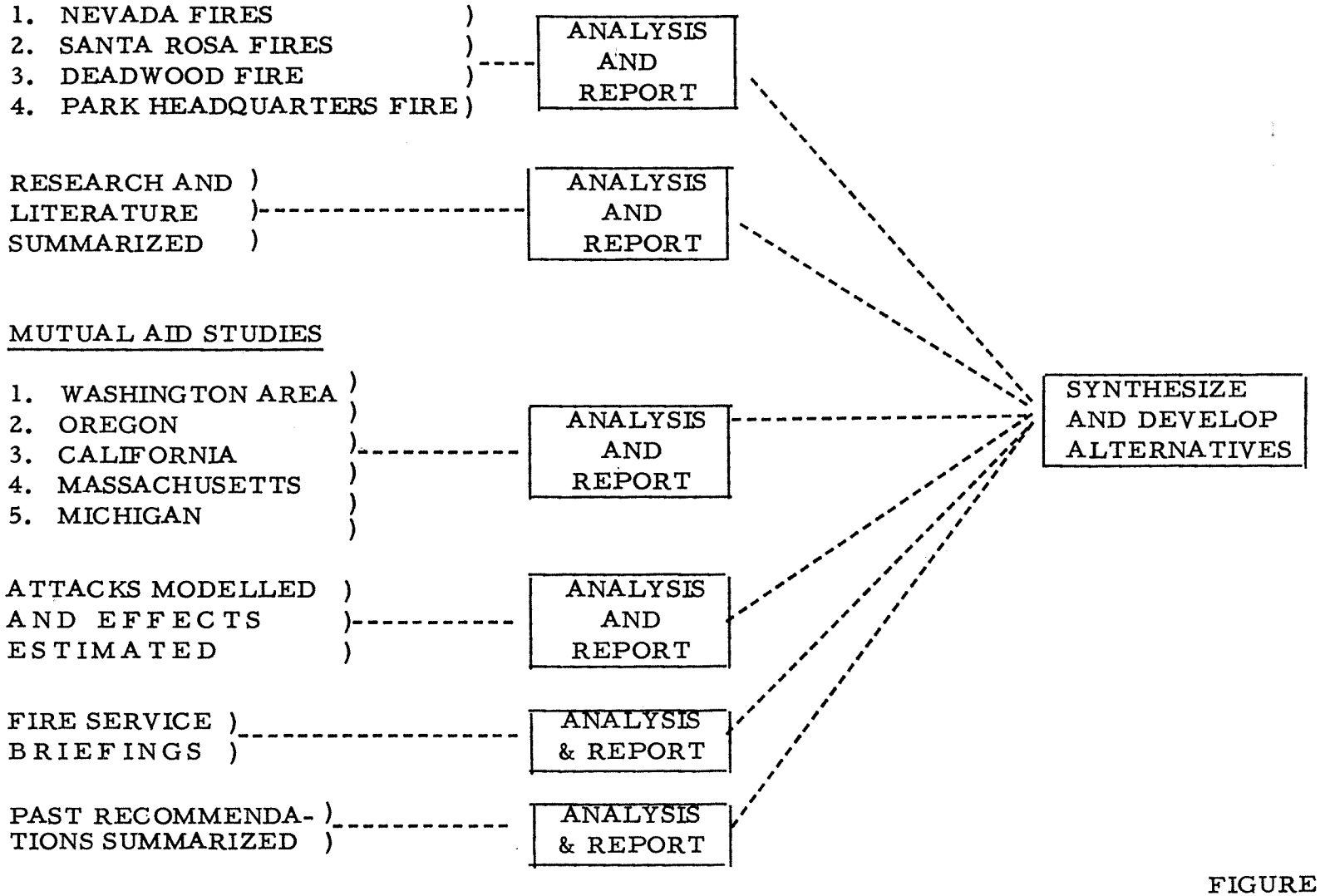

FIGURE 2

(3) recommend what should be done -- including alternative courses of action -- to achieve the most effective means of coping with large fire disasters. The fire study task force have studied the input data and identified some key questions that will help us get started. These will be available at the problem solving meeting. Recommendations made by the problem solving group will help provide direction for the remainder of the National Fire Coordination Study.